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# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

### Executive Order 40

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#### **IMPROVING SERVICES FOR VIRGINIA'S VETERANS**

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor under Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, including but not limited to, Chapter 1 of Title 2.2 and Section 2.2-2100 of the *Code of Virginia*, and subject to my continuing and ultimate authority and responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby set for the Commonwealth's policy for improving services for veterans.

#### **Importance of Veterans' Services**

The Commonwealth is home to 780,000 veterans who have served the cause of freedom in war and peace, from World War I to Afghanistan. The men and women serving in our armed forces have fervently and gallantly protected our nation's principles and freedoms throughout our history. Their service to our country – past and present – underscores dramatically the fact that freedom needs dedicated men and women to defend it and to sustain it.

It is only right, indeed it is imperative, that our Commonwealth provide the best possible service to veterans and their families, including assistance with obtaining federal benefits, nursing home or assisted living care at the Virginia Veterans Care Center, assistance in employment opportunities, or burial services at the Veterans Cemetery in Amelia County.

#### **The Governor's Advisory Commission**

The Governor's Advisory Commission for Veterans' Affairs (hereinafter referred to as "the Commission"), formulated recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of Virginia's veteran programs within available resources for both current and future needs. The Commission made a number of recommendations that are included in the administration's legislative package for the 2003 General Assembly. However, the importance of serving our veterans demands that

we take action now to improve services and to meet better the needs of veterans and their families.

### **Directives for Improving Veterans Services**

- I hereby direct all state agencies to identify opportunities for improving services to veterans and to make and implement appropriate changes. All agencies are to report on their progress on this directive to the Secretary of Administration by June 30, 2003.
- I hereby direct all state agency heads to renew their commitment to veterans' preference in hiring.
- I hereby direct the Secretary of Administration to develop quantifiable performance benchmarks for delivery of direct services to veterans to ensure the highest possible degree of service delivery.
- I hereby direct the Secretaries of Administration and Commerce and Trade to develop a joint strategy for attracting more military retirees to the Commonwealth, including such recommendations as may seem appropriate, by October 1, 2003.
- I hereby direct the Secretary of Administration to give a high priority to efforts to obtain federal grants, private contributions, and other resources for improving services to veterans in Virginia.

This Executive Order shall be effective immediately upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect until June 30, 2006, unless amended or rescinded by further Executive Order.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia, this 16th day of December, 2002.

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Mark R. Warner, Governor

Attest:

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Secretary of the Commonwealth